



# Success

Timely tips to improve student achievement

June 2020

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## **Mahoning County students learn about apprenticeships virtually**

Students participating in the **Mahoning County ESC's** Virtual Exploration Tour recently learned about apprenticeships as plumbers and pipefitters. Typically, 15 apprentices are selected from approximately 150 applicants interested in the paid career training opportunity. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU633>.

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## **Student achievement liaison meetings to be held in June**

In June, OSBA will host virtual regional meetings for board-appointed student achievement liaisons. Liaisons will receive a legislative update and short presentation about leading during the pandemic. Time is included for participant networking and sharing strategies for summer learning opportunities, school reopening in the fall and other topics of interest. For more, go to <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU634>.

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## **Guidance for reopening schools offered by CDC**

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) released guidelines outlining how schools can make decisions about reopening amid the COVID-19 pandemic, including checklists to help leaders determine readiness. Under the framework, schools, camps and child care centers should delay reopening until screening protocols for employees and children can be implemented. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU635>.

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## **Facilitating virtual collaboration: Tips for being creative virtually**

The brainstorming process used by creative teams can also be applied in remote working environments as long as the right mindset and technologies are deployed. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU636>.

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## **Research can inform online teaching**

Existing research on online learning can help improve remote instruction. The first step, says Boise State University professor Dr. **Kerry Rice**, is for teachers to experience online learning themselves to better understand the student experience. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU637>.

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## **Support dog continues work through virtual visits**

Willow, an emotional support dog for a Pennsylvania elementary school, has been helping students isolated by coronavirus closures with video appearances during tutoring sessions. **Kim Sloff**, the school's inclusion coordinator, says the labradoodle is such a fixture at the school that she even appears on the faculty page of the yearbook. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU638>.

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## Student achievement in-depth

Each month, **Success** brings you a research brief or in-depth article to discuss with board members and administrators.

### Motivating students without grades

Traditional motivations for students, such as grades, are no longer available during this prolonged period of remote instruction. As a result many students are disengaging, writes **Tim Klein**, project lead for the True North Program at Boston College.

As educators pass the two-month mark since schools shut their doors, we find ourselves entering a new phase in the learning process. Despite an optimistic start, educators and students are realizing that remote learning is not all that it's cracked up to be.

When distance learning started, it was a novelty for students; it was fun to sit at home and go to school without leaving the bed or getting out of sweatpants. That novelty has worn off. Zoom fatigue is real.

Educators and students all over the world claim they are witnessing the same trend: Students are turning off their videos and microphones. They are disconnecting and disengaging. What makes this especially challenging is that the traditional ways schools have motivated students are no longer available.

Historically, students were mandated to attend school, and they were incentivized to do well by being rewarded with grades, GPAs and class rankings. In a pre-COVID-19 world, the logic was simple: Good grades got students into a good college. The better the high school grades, the better the student's postsecondary options.

But thanks to COVID-19, grades have lost their meaning.

Many schools have changed their grading policies. Some have gone pass/fail, while others have removed grades entirely. At some schools, student grades were frozen in time, prepandemic, regardless of the work completed remotely.

It was right to implement these policies; they show concern for students and are an empathetic response to a terrible situation. Conversely, they eliminated grades as a motivating factor to do well in school. If students aren't rewarded with an A for a five paragraph essay, why write it? If they no longer want to go to college in a remote learning world, why should they push themselves to take AP statistics?

Perhaps this is for the best. Maybe we can finally ask the question: Have these strategies been working? Research suggests that intrinsic motivation and investing in students' holistic well-being can be even more of an incentive than grades. For more, visit <http://links.ohioschoolboards.org/SU639>.

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